

Correspondence

QJM

Prognostic serological markers of Henoch-Schönlein nephritis

Sir,
We read with interest the article on Henoch-Schönlein purpura with nephritis in adults by Shrestha *et al.*¹ They point out that there have been no serological markers of prognosis in Henoch-Schönlein nephritis (HSN) in both children and adults. However, a previous report of ours suggested that the serum IgA/C3 ratio could be a useful marker of disease activity in children with severe HSN.² In this study, the levels of serum IgA or C3 at presentation were variable, but serial assessment of the serum IgA/C3 ratio (Δ IgA/C3) showed a significant correlation with changes in severity of renal pathology and clinical outcome. High circulating levels of IgA did not always correlate with an increase of polymeric IgA1 and mesangial deposition, and levels of serum C3 are not generally decreased in HSN. However, the direction of the changes of IgA and C3 was important, and correlated with clinical outcome. Therefore, IgA and C3 may be an important factor in understanding the pathogenesis of HSN, and the measurement of serum IgA/C3 ratio may be a useful marker of renal progression in HSN patients. However, a large prospective study may be needed to elucidate whether serum IgA/C3 ratio predicts long-term prognosis in children and adults with HSN.

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Jellyfish responsible for Irukandji syndrome

Sir,
I enjoyed the recent letter from Little, Pereira, Carette and Seymour.¹ In a field where so little is known, all contributions help expand our knowledge base. However, of the five species presented, four have been previously linked to Irukandji syndrome,^{2–5} and the fifth may be an erroneous attribution.

Alatina mordens was previously linked with Irukandji syndrome in its original description,² which included variation in the number of eyes. Multiple species may someday be distinguished on the basis of their eye number as the authors have suggested, but this has not been demonstrated taxonomically.

Malo maxima was also previously linked with Irukandji syndrome in its original description,³ based on numerous eye-witness accounts of sting events identifying this as the culprit species. The genus name was derived from a person who survived a severe sting, believed to be from this species.

'*Carybdea alata*' from Hawaii was previously linked with Irukandji syndrome by Yoshimoto and Yanagihara,⁴ although they lacked empirical evidence for positive confirmation. The Hawaiian species is now formally known as *Alatina moseri*, being originally named *Carybdea moseri*⁵ and then transferred to the genus *Alatina*.²

'Fire jellies', also commonly called 'Morbakka', were previously linked with mild Irukandji syndrome by Fenner *et al.*⁶ and Williamson *et al.*⁷ The more severe case presented by Little *et al.*¹ is

References

- Shrestha S, Sumingan N, Tan J, Althous H, McWilliam L, Ballardie F. Henoch-Schönlein purpura with nephritis in adults: adverse prognostic indicators in a UK population. *Q J Med* 2006; **99**:253–65.